

except for the recitation of the retaining means having a plurality of projections to pierce the sides of the deformable pad through the groove in the pad. The Examiner also states that while no projections extend from the ends of the L-shaped cross sections, it is known in the wiping implement art, as taught by Vosbikian, to provide such projections to aid in securing the pad to the support by piercing the sides of the deformable pad in the region of its grooves. The Examiner states that to provide such projections on the end of the L-shaped retaining means in Johnson to aid in securing the pad against inadvertent pullout would have been obvious in view of Vosbikian.

Johnson is directed to a sandpaper holder block. Johnson does not teach or suggest the sanding system of Claim 1. For example, Johnson does not teach or suggest a sanding system containing a rectangular backing plate as described in element (a) of Claim 1. Johnson also does not teach or suggest a deformable sanding pad as in element (b) of Claim 1 wherein the sanding pad comprises a pair of opposed parallel ends and at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove. To the contrary, each of the rigidly clamped Johnson anvils, over which the sandpaper is placed, is illustrated as containing a rounded protuberance which fits into the head of the sandpaper holder block. The Johnson anvils do not contain a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove.

Johnson also does not teach or suggest at least one retaining means in communication with a backing plate having a generally L-shaped cross section with a plurality of projections extending from an end of the generally L-shaped cross section adapted at one end to pierce a side of a deformable sanding pad in the thickness direction through at least a portion of the groove, as described in element (c) of Claim 1. As acknowledged by the Examiner, Johnson does not teach or suggest a plurality of projections adapted to pierce a side of a deformable sanding pad.

Johnson also does not teach or suggest the pad of Claim 11. Johnson does not teach or suggest a sanding pad having a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove, as described in Claim 11. Instead, the anvils of Johnson have a rounded protuberance and do not contain a pair of opposed parallel ends, at least one of which comprises a groove.

There is no suggestion in the combined teachings of Johnson and Vosbikian to provide projections on the ends of what the Examiner describes as the "L-shaped retaining means" in Johnson. Johnson is directed to a sandpaper holder, while Vosbikian is directed to a window

cleaning device. The references are non-analogous art. One of ordinary skill in the art would not look to a window cleaning device reference to produce a sanding system. Furthermore, there is no suggestion in Johnson to apply the teachings of a window cleaning reference and there is no suggestion in Vosbikian to apply the teachings of a sandpaper holder reference. One of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to make the Examiner's suggested combination of teachings.

The anvils described by Johnson are rubber or plastic and Johnson teaches using a clamp screw to clamp the head of the device onto a protuberance of an anvil to rigidly hold the anvil in place. There is no suggestion in Johnson that teachings of devices for holding a window cleaning sponge, such as in Vosbikian, can be applied to hold the anvils taught by Johnson. Furthermore, there is no need suggested in either Johnson or Vosbikian to provide projections on the anvil groove in Johnson because Johnson teaches that the clamp screw is used to clamp the head portion onto the anvil protuberance and rigidly hold the anvil. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to make the Examiner's suggested modification to Johnson.

Because there is no suggestion in the references, alone or in combination, to make the Examiner's combination of references, the combination of Johnson with Vosbikian is improper and the claimed invention is patentable.

However, even if the combination of references is found to be proper, the claimed invention is nonobvious over Johnson in view of Vosbikian. Vosbikian is directed to a window cleaning device. Vosbikian does not teach or suggest a sanding system as described in Claim 1 or a pad for a sanding system as described in Claim 11. Like Johnson, Vosbikian does not teach or suggest a sanding system containing a rectangular backing plate as described in element (a) of Claim 1. Vosbikian also does not teach or suggest a deformable sanding pad as in element (b) of Claim 1 wherein a sanding pad comprises a pair of opposed parallel ends and at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove. Vosbikian does not teach, and the Vosbikian window cleaning sponge clearly does not contain, a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove, as described in Claim 11.

Since Vosbikian does not remedy the deficiencies of Johnson, the claimed invention is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Johnson in view of Vosbikian.

Rejection of Claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Vosbikian and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,524,175, issued to Beaudry *et al.* on February 25, 2003 (hereinafter, “Beaudry”). The Examiner states that to make the sanding pad of a resilient open-celled foam product such as polyurethane to allow the tool to better conform to the shape of the work surfaces for improved removal would have been obvious in view of Beaudry.

As described above, neither Johnson nor Vosbikian, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the claimed invention. Beaudry does not teach or suggest a sanding system as described in Claim 1, from which Claim 2 depends, or a pad for a sanding system as described in Claim 11, from which Claim 12 depends. In addition, Beaudry does not remedy the above-described deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian. Like Johnson and Vosbikian, Beaudry does not teach or suggest a deformable sanding pad as in element (b) of Claim 1 wherein a sanding pad comprises a pair of opposed parallel ends and at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove. Beaudry also does not teach or suggest at least one retaining means in communication with a backing plate having a generally L-shaped cross section with a plurality of projections extending from an end of the generally L-shaped cross section adapted at one end to pierce a side of a deformable sanding pad in the thickness direction through at least a portion of the groove, as described in element (c) of Claim 1.

In addition, like Johnson and Vosbikian, Beaudry does not teach or suggest a sanding pad having a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove, as described in Claim 11, from which Claim 12 depends.

Since Beaudry does not remedy the deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian, the invention of Claims 2 and 12 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Johnson in view of Vosbikian further in view of Beaudry.

Rejection of Claims 5-6 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 5-6 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Vosbikian and further in view of French Patent Publication No. 2,620,367, by Pascallon and published on March 17, 1989 (hereinafter, “Pascallon”). The

Examiner states that to make the various sanding surfaces of Johnson with different sanding characteristics for selective use of portions of the tool depending upon the condition of the work surface would have been obvious in view of Pascallon.

As described above, neither Johnson nor Vosbikian, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the claimed invention. Pascallon does not teach or suggest a sanding system as described in Claims 5-6 or a pad for a sanding system as described in Claims 14-15. In addition, Pascallon does not remedy the above-described deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian.

Pascallon is directed to a rubber block to which abrasive sheets are fastened with hook and loop fasteners. Like Johnson and Vosbikian, Pascallon does not teach or suggest a deformable sanding pad as in element (b) of Claim 1, from which Claims 5 and 6 depend, wherein a sanding pad comprises a pair of opposed parallel ends and at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove. In addition, Pascallon does not teach or suggest at least one retaining means in communication with a backing plate having a generally L-shaped cross section with a plurality of projections extending from an end of the generally L-shaped cross section adapted at one end to pierce a side of a deformable sanding pad in the thickness direction through at least a portion of the groove, as described in element (c) of Claim 1. Also, like Johnson and Vosbikian, Pascallon does not teach a sanding pad containing a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove, as described in Claim 11, from which Claims 14 and 15 depend.

Since Pascallon does not remedy the deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian, the invention of Claims 5-6 and 14-15 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Johnson in view of Vosbikian and further in view of Pascallon.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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